

thing at all." (He seemed to be fully informed.) "One has to teach them like babies. You first feed small babies by breast—" (I felt like being funny and saying, 'Not I, I'm equipped!' but let him continue.)—"then, out of small bottles. When their teeth have cut they can eat bread or meat. The same goes for my congregation. First I preach to them about things they are familiar with, or have an idea, or have heard about, in order to acquaint them better with that particular matter. They know that there is a God, and a devil and hell, but they know nothing else about it. After I tell them new things I go further and explain other mysteries of religion."

"Did you know—" He exclaimed turning to me, as if about to divulge the deepest secret, "some parishioners are so ignorant that they did not know even what 'the collection' meant? When I was preaching for the first time in one of my churches, I asked a man to make the collection, and he actually did not know what I was talking about, and I had to explain this important matter! Now he's quite good at it."

I realize that he would not permit an oversight pertaining to this important source of inspiration and enlightenment.

"What church do you attend?" he suddenly asked me.

"The Catholic."

"Oh-I was there once, but I did not like it."

"Why not?"

"It has no divine inspiration (again that word!)"

Later he complained, that in the North, there, even the Baptist preachers are formal. They know a week ahead what their sermon will be and what hymn will be sung. "This is not inspired by God! The sermons do not come from the heart—therefore, they are not divine inspirations."

"As I was in your church" said he, "you will now have to visit our church, and you'll be convinced that I told you the truth. I'll have to get off now, so I'll say Good bye. May God bless you, my son!" And with the blessing at parting he alighted.

I smiled with scepticism and irony as I bid adieu to this "spiritual father", and wondered, is he naive, or did I seem naive to him, or did he think I was dumb!

And missionaries are sent to Africa and Asia!

COMMENTS AND LETTERS

It all started because of a description of a Jewish folk dance.

Check The Bible Again, Sir.

My Dear Mr. Beliajus: — ...I have read your publication of VILTIS more than once. There are many pleasant items of reading, but as before I note in your August 1946 issue you have not been too conscientious in quoting a quotation from a very specific source. It is wrong to ad-lib a quotation.

Nowhere in the New Testament have I been able to ascertain this quotation from your article in the Folk Dancers Nook — "Der Karrerod": "That heaven and earth may disappear, but not a word nor an iota of the Jewish will ever vanish."

Check Matt. 24. 35, Mark 13. 31, Luke 21. 33, Matt 5. 18 and Luke 16. 17. And you will grasp what I mean.

My point is this, a serious and conscientious reader like myself usually goes to the source material when a writer begins expressing judgement over the men and women who make up the mass of common people. In your aroused feelings I do not feel that you speak like a bro-

ther when you write: "No matter how great the slaughter of the Jewish people, they will survive even the Christians..."

My second point is this: A Jew living up the Ten Commandments has the same claim to eternity as the Christian living up to the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would they shoul do unto you."

If there are slaughters among men today it is equally true that the Jew is just as lax in following the Ten Commandments as the Christian is lax in following the Golden Rule. — C. V. Liutas, Chicago, Ill.

True, it was an "ad-lib" quotation. When I quote directly from the source I state the exact source and write the statement in quotations. You will note I have done neither. However, this is what Matt. 5. 17—19 says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. (18) For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one title shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. (19) Whosoever therefore shall break one of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven, etc." Luke 16. 17 says: "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass than one title of the law to fail". Practically the very same thing in Luke 21. 33, Mark 13. 33, and Matt. 24. 35. I can't grasp any other meaning than what it says in black on white. What I was trying to prove is that we as a Christian nation do not observe the law (ten commandments). If we did we would not kill, slaughter and covet, and the "Golden Rule" would have not been needed.

According to Christian belief, and it has been pounded into me often, the Jews will survive and be present in order to bear witness to the second coming of the Lord. And since all apostles insist, according to your own selected sentences, that "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away". (Luke 21. 33) I am prone to believe it is to be so.

I do heartily agree with you that the Jews are just as lax about observing their law as we are ours. But that does not justify slaughter of Jews because they are Jews nor of Negroes because they are black. — VFB

LITHUANIAN JEWS

Dear Vytis: —

This letter which I am sending you, came to my attention in a round-about fashion. The retiring president of my congregation recently returned from a business trip to France. In Paris he met the recipient of the letter, a Russian born doctor who had lived in France for many years, fled during the Nazi occupation, and now is back, having lost his family in the meantime.

Perhaps you will find this letter as stirring as I did. It is not unusual, of course; merely one more record of these past terrible years.

As you will note, Lithuania is the "scene" of the story in its early and tragic part. Palestine is the scene of the "Happy ending" (?).

Cordially,

Sidney J. Jacobs, Rabbi

(A part of the letter Rabbi Jacobs referred to, is reprinted below.)

I hope you received my last letter. I have been in Palestine recently and went to see Gita at Handera. She lives together with her husband Gdud at the home of his brother. She met him last year when she returned from her place of hiding to Wilno and found nobody in town who might befriend her in her plight. Practically all Jews except for a handful of 200 were dead. She felt for-

lorn and desperate, when passing the street one day she met Gdud whom she had known before. He had been in hiding himself in the quagmire of a dense forest where he lived in a foxhole with his 17-year-old son on the charity of some good Christians who used to be employed in his turpentine factory situated nearby.

I know that it is hard to imagine how one can live for years together in a foxhole amid the swamps of a forest, under the most awful conditions of cold, hunger and constant dread of betrayal. But misery acquaints a man with strange bed-fellows. A Jew at that time was regarded as a fair game for anybody to kill. His life was cheaper than a dog's, because there were many dogs running in the streets, free, but there were hundreds of Jews who got paid for each head they brought to the Gestapo. And whoever entered the gate of Lukiski prison knew that he was marked for death at Ponary. Many native gentiles took part in this man-hunt, even before the ghetto was established. They regarded it one way as a sport to catch Jews and another way as a source of income. Two months after the ghetto had been established there started mass-executions. The Gestapo used to come down at midnight and take whoever came uppermost. They drove them direct to Ponary where it was known death awaited them.

Dear Cousin, when Gita and Gdud recited to me all the martyrdom which our own brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers had gone through in this horrible time, I sat like one dumbfounded and could not find a word to say. I heard in this grim recital the cries of tender babes torn from their mothers' bosom and their little heads dashed against the wall, the agony of dying women, not killed outright but wounded in order that their slow agony might give a fiendish delight to their tormentors who gloated over them with sadistic pleasure.

I heard Gita tell how my own father was beaten with a club for taking up a small parcel of necessities when he was driven out at midnight to Ponary for killing, and he in his innocence and indomitable optimism still believed that he was being led into another ghetto, as there were such rumors.

I understood then how it was possible for a human being to spend three years in a fo-hole as only those who were fit for this sort of life had any hope of surviving. Not even life in a foxhole was always secure. Many of them were betrayed by the native population and tracked down to their lair and killed in the most atrocious manner. Gdud was among the very few who survived this inhuman ordeal and he came to Palestine to inspire me with a hatred to every boche which is only comparable to the hatred the Nazis themselves bore to us Jews.

To resume the story of Gita, when she was being led to execution in the streets of Wilno, among hundreds of other Jews, she succeeded in a moment when the guard averted his head from her, to slip off the crowd and on to the causeway where she intermingled with the passers-by. She had a baby of six weeks on her arms, while her elder daughter was still inside the doomed troop walking by the side of Gita's sister.

Gita told her sister to let loose the child as soon as she saw her outside the ring. Her sister (Deborah; you remember her) did not do it quickly enough and Gita, in an agony of despair, stepped off the causeway and tried to get hold of the child. In that moment she was spied by the guard and driven back to the multitude. They were now close to Lukiski prison, and Gita felt that her sands were running out. In a last bid to gain her liberty she slipped off again and succeeded. But all the others

were quickly lost sight of. They entered the prison and the day of life closed upon them.

Gitta wandered about the streets of Wilno like one who escaped from the gallows and is in imminent danger of being re-caught. She did not know to whom to turn with the small baby on her arms. At last she fled to a monastery where she remembered the prioress whom she had known in the course of her work at Kinkulkin's and to whom she now made a vehement appeal for help.

The infant, it was decided, should remain in the monastery while for herself it was devised that she should assume the character of a pupil brought up in that monastery and now going into the country for work. An address of a kindly old landlady was supplied to her and with forged documents she set out on the journey. Her place of destination was 150 kilometers distant from Wilno, and to relate the endless series of apprehensions and imminent risk of being discovered under her flimsy disguise would be tedious. So I leave it out.

Suffice it that she reached, after many dangerous adventures, the appointed place and was received with perfect cordiality by the landlady in question to whom she confided the truth about herself. As no less than death was threatened to anyone harboring under his roof a Jew, the Christian landlady, it must be owned, ran into a very grave danger by accepting Gitta. The thing was made easier that Gitta, though not distinctly Aryan in appearance, has on the other hand not a distinctly Jewish face either and that her accent was fairly good.

On the estate of that lady Gitta spent the whole

JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

Dear Fin: — Apropos of your remark in the last VILTIS on Christian persecution of the Jews, I read a book by Sholem Asch some time ago which dealt with that subject. The name was "One Destiny". His subject was to show that Christianity and Judaism had much in common, that they sprang from the same heritage and had much the same goal. In this book he also made a strong indictment of Christians for their persecution of Jews. On page 43 he said "How can we believe that Jesus is the Messiah when he has become the origin of everything evil and wicked that has come over Israel, since his name appeared in the world?" This, he quoted, as being the painful cry in Jewish writings over centuries.

But Asch also went on to praise Christians in Europe at this time for the work they done to protect Jews from scourge of Nazism. On p. 77 he said, "It may be stated without exaggeration that almost the entire remnant of Israel which was found in the liberated countries — no matter how small its number — has the Christians to thank for its preservation." So you see, Finnie, there are two sides to this story and not both sides are dark. While in France and Belgium, I heard story after story of Catholics and Protestants taking incredible risk to save Jewish people. The Bishop of Liege had for several years a Jewish Rabbi disguised as an assisting priest of his. This I heard in Liege from creditable sources.

Fin, while I am naturally a proponent of Christianity, I am willing and ready to admit its defects. I do not believe you are an opponent of Christianity in its principle and essence, simply opposed to the way in which many people distort Christianity to support their prejudice and greed. I believe we agree on the value of the principles of Christianity and in our condemnation of the way in which people have betrayed these principles.

Chaplain Wm. R. Shaw
Ft. Lewis, Washington